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THE ALASKA BOUNDARY.
 A Joint Commission Will Probably Be Appointed to Determine It.
 Washington, Feb. 24.—There is a

Mr. Otto J. Klotz, the Dominion expert who had been sent to the Stikkeen River to obtain information on the disputed boundary between Alaska and British Columbia, will no doubt be followed by the presentation of his views upon that subject to our Government through the British Minister at Washington.

The controversy is one that has been going on a long time, and its importance has increased with the growth of settlements in the disputed region. The treaty of 1825 between Great Britain and Russia described the boundary as follows:

Commencing from the southermost point of the island called Prince of Wales Island, which point lies in 55° 40' North latitude and between 131° 30' and 134° degree of west longitude (meridian of

to the continent where it strikes the 50th degree of the north latitude, and from this last-mentioned point the line of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude is situated parallel to the west as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude and the 49th degree of north latitude. From this point of intersection, the said meridian line of the 141st degree of west longitude is prolonged as far as the point of intersection with the 49th degree of north latitude, and from this point the said line will sweep across Russian and British possessions on the continent of America to the northwest.

The next article of the convention stipulated that Prince of Wales Island should belong wholly to Russia, which ceded it in 1867 to the United States. Then the agreement proceeded to define the line of demarcation already spoken of in the following terms:

That whenever the summit of the mountain that rises from the point of intersection of the 49th degree of north latitude and the 141st degree of west longitude shall prove to be at

It is under these provisions that the dispute about the boundary has arisen. The treaty of 1825, it will be seen, gave to Russia a narrow strip of territory on the coast south of Mount Elias, extending as far as the Gulf of Alaska. This ownership the United States succeeded on the purchase of Alaska twenty-two years ago. In the treaty of Washington, made in 1857, Canada received the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, from Sitka to Ukon, Porcupine, and Stikine Rivers. But the line described by the treaty as following the summit of the mountains has never yet been surveyed, and consequently the line is quite hazy. Thus, at the beginning of the line in Portland Channel is not indistinctly marked. Seventeen years ago Canada initiated a pro-

the region of the supposed boundary, and mainly, she believed, on her side of it, a gold-bearing district had been discovered; and as the United States claimed the territory as American territory, it was feared that Canadians would not be able to hold their own against the enterprise of American prospectors. As a settlement of the boundary was therefore the only way in which the question of the territory should be seasonably had, the cost of making the survey was great, and the task has been put off from that time to the present, although different presidents have urged it. In 1876, when the Congress met, the great overtures of Great Britain under which the Dominion was to pay half the expense of the proposed survey, were favorably received. It was then that any further delay in the appropriation was reported in Congress. The army engineers at first computed that the survey would take ten years and cost about

line never yet traversed. In addition, the possibility of there being great irregularities in the range of the fishery, together with the treaty stipulation of an occasional substitution of a line parallel to the coast, would make it impossible to exceed tonnage league therefrom, promised great difficulties in the task. However, the Legislature, in the consideration of the proposed survey for all practical purposes, could be made in four years, at a cost to both countries of about \$1,000,000; and a Canadian survey of the same length would be made at a cost, which may accordingly be assumed as sufficiently correct.

It is reasonable to believe that during the coming session of Congress provision will be made appointing a joint commission to run the line, and that the Government of the United States has the Dominion of the subject on account of the apathy of Congress; but lately the Government of the United States has shown the absolute need of putting them under the operation of law, has revived the matter in both countries. Its importance may

boundary surfaces the Tuxton point, 12 miles above the point where Government maps put it; and in that region are the best gold-bearing deposits yet discovered. As the cost of determining the boundary will be only about \$500,000 to each country, and hundreds of miners are at work in the disputed territory, it is obviously prudent not to wait for an actual conflict of authority and perhaps a war. The new Governor of Alaska, Mr. Knapp, has just pointed out the lack of land laws and legal titles in that Territory. One compensation is that in the mining region the Government has the right to make a compromise at just when the boundary shall have been settled.

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